

# Into The Woods; Improving student performance through environmental literacy



A four year, teacher, professional development project funded with a NOAA Environmental Literacy Grant.

Presenter: Peter Schmidt, Associate Director GLOBE NY Metro Queens College CUNY





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## Some of the things we learned after 13 years:

- Many Elementary Teachers were not trained in Inquiry science methods.
- Many teachers and far too many students were afraid to go into natural areas. (Lions and Tigers and Bears; OH MY!)
- Principals were reluctant to let teachers take classes outside, even on school grounds.
  - They felt field trips were a distraction from required work.
  - Believed they are dangerous.
- For many teachers the one shot training was not enough.
- General data collection was not focused enough ,teachers need a goal.
- Everyone loved the GLOBE concept!
- The GLOBE NY Metro Associate Director needed more time in the field.



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GLOBE NY Metro is the Southern NY State partner in the GLOBE Program

**GLOBE is an acronym for:**

**Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment**

- The GLOBE Program was announced on Earth Day 1994 to address a crisis in science education. Founding organizations included:



- GLOBE training began in 1995; there are now >56,000 teachers in >24,000 GLOBE schools in 114 countries on all continents (including Antarctica)
- The United Nations actively supports GLOBE through UNICEF



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## **GLOBE Students Learn and Practice Authentic Science**

**Student measurements of local environmental conditions are posted to an international data base to be shared by students and scientists around the world. Learn more at; [www.GLOBE.gov](http://www.GLOBE.gov)**



**The area around each school essentially becomes a laboratory in which students learn to observe nature, ask questions, and design research projects to answer them**



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## **GLOBE NY Metro** is the GLOBE Program's Partnership for southern New York State

**Based at Queens College CUNY we are responsible for recruiting, training, and providing ongoing support for GLOBE teachers, and for improving science education for all K-12 students. As of today, we have trained:**

- ~2,300 teachers from ~ 750 public, private, and parochial schools in the metropolitan area and beyond.**



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# Into The Woods

Was designed to address those issues and help participating teachers make the outdoors an extension of their classrooms.



We started where teachers are most comfortable, in the classroom with Story book based, Elementary GLOBE

# Did activities from the teacher guide



**Creating a Cloudscape**



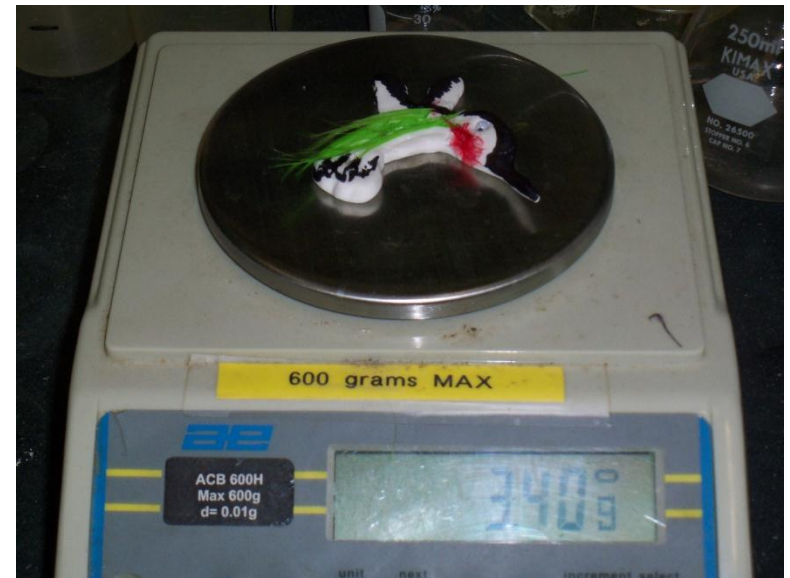
**From “The Clouds Have Names”**







## Mystery of the Disappearing Hummingbirds



**We gently introduced them to exploring the woods by recreating the adventures in the stories.**



**Discoveries at Willow Creek**





P5180020.jpg

➤ Year one is all about getting the teachers comfortable working outdoors on a personal basis.

- Having positive experiences outdoors and building content knowledge.
- Teachers can schedule class trips led by our staff.



Starting in year 2 Teachers will lead (with GLOBE staff support) long term investigations of an aspect of the local environment. To focus the investigation they will use GLOBE protocols.

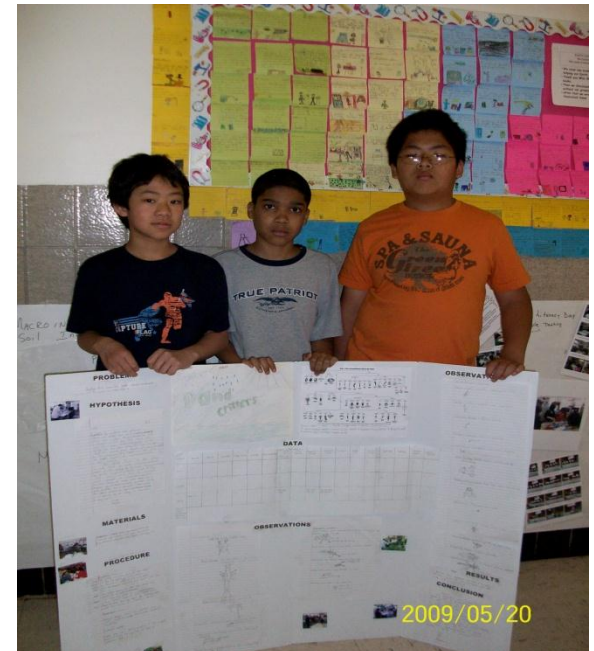


Students learn that a 2 hour field trip can mean 2 days doing the lab work.



Then comes the compilation and analysis of our data.

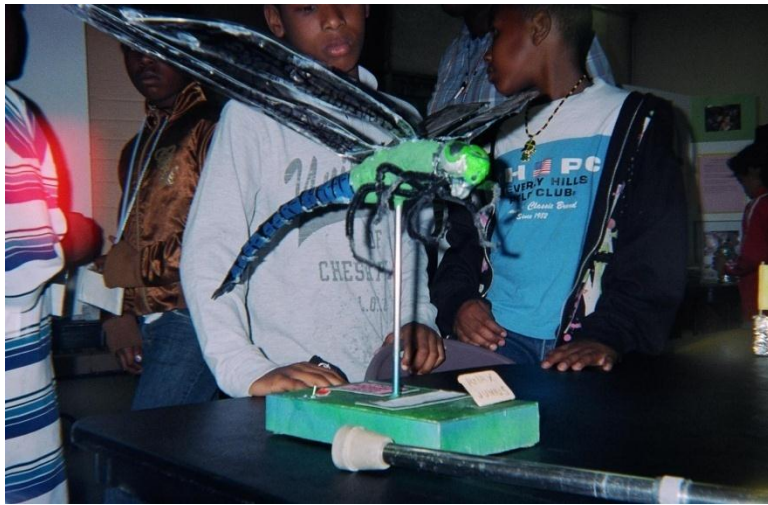
# Making sense of findings



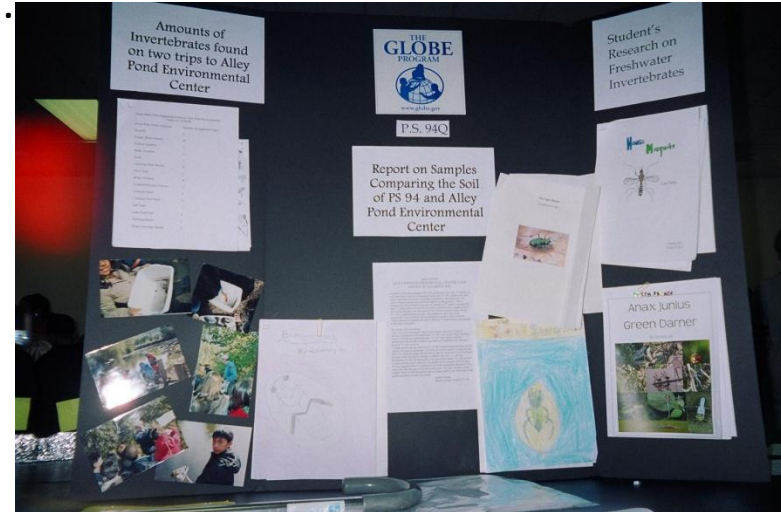


# And like real scientists sharing.

Collaboration and strengthening of the GLOBE NY Metro community as we gather at the year end symposium.



- To be Held on the Queens College campus.





➤ Year four and beyond.

They should be ready to lead their students

**Into the Woods!**



Peter Schmidt

Associate Director, Queens College